

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
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*Western District of New York*

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# **PRESS RELEASE**

December 13, 2005

**RE: UNITED STATES v. MITCHELL M. LAFRANCE,  
ANTHONY MARINACCIO, NOAH GLADDING, ERIC CONNELLY  
AND JOSIAH HOWENSTINE**

Acting United States Attorney Kathleen Mehltrittter announced today a six-count Indictment, charging Mitchell M. LaFrance, Anthony Marinaccio, Noah Gladding, and Eric Connelly, with conspiracy to distribute marijuana in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846, carrying a maximum penalty of life imprisonment, a fine of \$4,000,000.00, or both. In Counts 2, 3, 4 and 5, Noah Gladding, Eric Connelly and Josiah Howenstine are charged with kidnapping, in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 1201(a), conspiracy to kidnap, in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 1201(c), discharge of a firearm possessed in furtherance of a drug conspiracy, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c), and discharge of a firearm possessed in furtherance of a crime of violence, also in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c). In Count 6, Noah Gladding is charged with using a firearm to commit a crime of violence and causing death, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(j). The maximum penalty for Counts 2-6 is life imprisonment. It should be noted that the fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime . . . is merely an accusation and the

defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. (**Disciplinary Rule 7-107(B)(6)**).

Assistant U.S. Attorney Everado Rodriguez stated that the Indictment charges the defendants LaFrance, Marinaccio, Gladding and Connelly with conspiring together to distribute over 1,000 kilograms of marijuana in New York and Connecticut from 2001 to March of 2005. In Counts 2-6, the charges stem from the kidnapping of Jason Argersinger in Connecticut, his transportation to New York and his homicide in Genesee County in the Western District of New York.

The Indictment was the culmination of an investigation on the part of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Michael Lewandus, the New York State Police, under the direction of Commissioner James McMahon and the Connecticut State Police, under the direction of Commissioner of Public Safety, Leonard C. Boyle.

The evidence was presented to the Grand Jury by Everado Rodriguez, Assistant United States Attorney, who will handle the trial of the case.